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Letters

Showing Concern for Children Held in Detention Centers

Judith Ackerson

With so many news stories continually perking to the top, we must not forget the children who are still being detained, jailed, in detention centers. They are suffering severe emotional distress. When they are reunited with their families, it will be years of healing from their separation and some may never recover. Don't forget, either, the for-profit companies that are making millions of dollars on their suffering.

We also need to be mindful of the diseases these children are contracting while in detention, measles and mumps

in particular, which can have lifelong health consequences and even death.

Today it is "their" children. If we don't turn the tide, it may be "our" children next. Where were you born? We must stop this slippery slope of cruelty from this administration and the people around President Trump who are silent. Where are the representatives and senators who are supposed to protect us from a despot in the White House? Thank you to Senator Shaheen and Senator Hassan for their compassion and leadership.



Learning From History

Pecco Beaufays

I was born in Germany in 1948, after World War II ended.

I've had to live my whole life with the stigma of responsibility for crimes against humanity committed by my country.

Part of my family is German, the other part Belgian. I remember being the target of insults on the street in Belgium because my father's American car had German plates. It took my cousins in Belgium a long time to accept my sister and me because of the stories they heard in school about the "bad Germans".

In my professional career in international hotel management (working for THE greatest American International Hotel Company, Inter-Continental Hotels, owned by Pan Am) I was confronted with the guilt for these crimes on all my business trips around the world, especially in France, England and the United States. I always had to defend myself with "I was born after all that had happened". However, inside, I did feel guilty for the sins of my country, and eventually I emigrated to the United States and became an American citizen.

Today, I live in an America which once again is beginning to operate detention centers that appear to resemble the concentration camps, where men, women, and especially children of a particular ethnicity are treated in unbelievably inhumane ways; no space to lie down to sleep, no sanitary equipment, children taken from their parents – just because these people dared to ask us for asylum, a promise our country signed onto years ago with the rest of the free world.

Today, we have a President with authoritarian tendencies, who makes statements with no apparent factual basis, implements policies (such as those related to taxes, immigration, health care, and food stamps) which I believe will make his citizens poorer and less free, insults almost any group of human beings besides his own male white race, covers up for Russia, by all appearances enriches himself and his family

by steering government business to his own properties, and has wiggled out of paying what he owed to his workers by declaring bankruptcy several times.

In my opinion, if any of us had committed a fraction of the seemingly illicit actions taken by President Trump, as reported in the news media, it's likely we ordinary people would be in prison. Is a sitting President above the law?

We have a Vice President who doesn't want to spend time alone in a room with "the devil, any women", yet who openly appears to condone the president's behavior. These, our leaders, have surrounded themselves with elected officials who, by their voting record and/or actions/inactions, are, in my opinion, hurting the very people who voted them into office.

On the topic of women's rights and politicians, it is my firm belief that no man, elected or otherwise, should be involved with a woman's right of choice because it should be just that – a woman's right.

I personally do not understand how anyone, especially those who voice adherence to religious beliefs of any kind, can stand silent and support inhumane treatment of people and agree that children who are in our country on a visa to receive medical treatment can be kicked out of the country with a 30-day notice.

All of this looks to me so much like the rise of the authoritarian regime I referred to earlier, that existed before I was born. If so, the ramifications for us will persist for decades.

Is this the country that we are proud to call our own, this new America? Are "we, the people" agreeing with, or at least acquiescing to these new policies? If so, then it is my opinion that we are also guilty, all of us, along with our children and their children. We will be judged harshly, just as I and generations of other young Germans have been accused for the sins of our forefathers.

Do we really wish this curse upon our kids?



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